

"Photo of the Day" to Increase Photography Creativity

I have long incorporated the "Photo of the Day" exercise into my Photography Lab classes. They are a great way to make sure you are taking a least one photograph a day. They force you to begin to think creatively as you have to find more and more ways to photograph the same thing everyday. You begin to simplify as you become creative, and simplification is the be-all/end-all to great composition. You start to play with techniques you may not otherwise have tried out as you try to make each day's photograph different from the last.



"Day 55 of the 365 Days Project" captured by Ernie728 (Click Image to See More From Ernie728)

You do lens study's to see how different lenses affect your subject. You play with perspective. You play with light. You play with time. You begin to stop thinking of your subject (after all – it's the same subject everyday) and start thinking solely about the creative process and how you can push yourself. You begin to imagine fun things you can do with your subject and you start to try some of these imaginings out.

My students always grumble: I have to have my camera with me every day; I have to take a photo every day; I don't have time to take a photo a day; what am I going to shoot every single day; how am I going to shoot the same thing every single day; what in the world will I do with all the photos I've taken??

As a studio owner, I had similar grumbles and work at the studio prevented me from having time to take "fun" photographs so I never participated in the Photo of the Day Lab exercises. Until last summer. I decided if I was going to talk the talk I might as well shoot the shot at the same time.



"8/365 - Indian Chess" captured by Jason C. Wong (Click Image to See More From Jason C. Wong)

Wow. How difficult I found this to be the first couple of weeks. First -what to shoot? Coffee of the day seemed too boring. I wear funky socks so I already take a "Socks Photo of the Day", but that is more for fun and Facebook, not for learning photography techniques. Time of the day – that seems easy enough. Thankfully my handy-dandy DroidX has not only an 8mp camera, but an alarm.

So – after randomly deciding on 3:03pm, and setting the alarm to go off at 3:03 each day, I set about to start my Photo of the Day Assignment. I started taking photos each day at 3:03. I got through 3 or 4 days and realized the part-time job I had at the time was not really the most conducive or creative place for taking a 3:03 photo. So, I changed my time of the day to 8:08pm. Reset the alarm, and restarted my assignment.

How quickly I learned the true point of photo of the day assignments. Of course, these are points I yammer on constantly about to my students, so it would seem I knew them already. Knowing these points intellectually – and knowing them photographically – two entirely different things all together. How in the world did I think Coffee of the Day could be boring?? I had totally missed the point!!! And while time of the day seems like a great idea – it doesn't give me the same subject everyday so I don't get the chance to lose myself in the creative process of making the same subject look different everyday.





"33 of 365 - Stormy Sky" captured by Linda L (Click Image to See More From Linda L)

So – I’ve reassessed my own assignment work and realized I had tackled this project all wrong. I’ve changed my photo of the day from 8:08 to an actual subject: a small paperweight. I start the assignment all over again, starting today. I’ll keep the 8:08 photo gallery I started, but I’ll start a new Photo of the Day for my paperweight. Let’s see if I really can shoot the shot while talking the talk.

About the Author

Professional photographer Loreen Liberty has been taking photographs since her early teens, and in the professional industry for the past nine year. After many successful years as a wedding and portrait photographer, Loreen decided to turn her attentions to teaching photography full time. “It gives me more time to practice my craft and be artistic for myself.” View more tips, tricks, and photography related articles by Loreen at

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